

Keys of Life Trilogy - Key of Fire

by Nightfury991

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Summary: Once they found the first Key of Life, they knew they couldn't stop until they found all four. With their Dragons and best friends at their sides, Marko and Hiccup will stop at nothing to find the Keys of Life. First stop, Key of Fire: the hot-headed member of the family. But, as all ways, things don't go quite according to plan, and this time is no exception... UP FOR ADOPTION

1. Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Gasping, Marko found himself lying down on a very hard and bumpy ground. Groaning, Marko rubbed the back of his head, thinking, _must've hit it really hard,_ and sat up. Looking around, he saw that he had somehow arrived on a very rocky and humid piece of land. Groaning as he stood up, Marko looked around and nearly fell back down in shock and fear: there was a river of lava flowing a few feet away from where he had landed. Taking deep breaths, Marko turned around and started walking away from the river of lava, which had started to lightly bubble small lava blobs. Squinting his eyes, Marko coughed at the amount of smoke that there was in the air, and roughly shouted, "Hiccup!" Looking around, Marko couldn't see anything, other than several rivers of lava and the mass of blackened ground. Trying to breathe in as little smoke as he could, Marko started walking towards the nearest pile of land, which had a thin river of lava on one side, and a gaping crack running down the other side.

Suddenly, Marko saw a flash of green amongst the mass of blackened ground, and started to run as fast as he could towards it. After a few more seconds of running, Marko came into a partly smoke-free area of air and immediately saw the small body of a young boy: he was wearing a light green shirt, which was covered with a brown fur vest, along with a pair of brown trousers, and a single boot: his other foot, and lower leg, was missing, and replaced by a fake leg of wood and metal. "Hiccup!" called Marko, and ran over to the unconscious

form of the boy. Pressing his hand against the boy's neck lightly, Marko let out a sigh of relief when he felt a weak heartbeat from the boy. Hitting his face lightly, Marko called his name several times before the boy eventually woke up. Groaning, Hiccup woke up and immediately started to panic when he saw where they were. "Marko, where are we?!" shouted Hiccup as Marko helped him up. Wiping some sweat that had formed on his forehead, Marko said, "Well, we're someplace hot, but other than that, I'm clueless."

Suddenly, the wind picked up and the smoke and ash that surrounded them quickly moved away and they saw something that caused them to step back in shock.

In front of them, stood a massive volcano with small rivers of magma running down the sides of it. There was a massive column of soot and ash hanging over the volcano, giving an ominous feeling and look when they looked up to it. Looking at Marko, Hiccup asked, "D'you it has something to do with that?" as he pointed to Marko's pocket. Digging around in his pocket, Marko pulled out a golden triangle with two green gems on it: the Earth Key of Life. This was one of four Keys that, legend had it, could give the person who brought them all together the powers of the elements, as well as giving life to the dead: Marko was living proof of that! Looking up at the volcano, Marko muttered, "Fire," under his breath. Looking at Hiccup, Marko said, "This must be where the Fire Key is." But before they could start to look for the Key, they saw strange writings on one of the natural walls. Walking up to it, Marko knelt down and studied them, while Hiccup stood a few steps behind him, and asked, "Can you read it?" Looking at the letters carefully, Marko said, "This is Human-Dragonese: the ancient language of the White Fury Tribe." Getting up, Marko said, "Whoever wrote this, they knew someone from my tribe would come to find the Key."

Suddenly, the blinding white light that brought them here consumed them, and dragged them into their light. "Marko!" shouted Hiccup, but no call replied. Mere seconds later, Hiccup felt a buzzing sound inside his head and before he could do anything, his vision was blocked by darkness. In the darkness, Hiccup saw several numbers and letters, all of which meant no sense to Hiccup, but the moment he thought that, the letters and numbers started to move towards each other, making words and directions to something. Looking them over, Hiccup read them, and they said, "North of the Froze, East of the Cave of Fury, and two days South-East, the Key of Fire will be waiting for you." — Hiccup had just enough time to remember all of what it said, before they disappeared and the breath was caught in his throat, and he fell into unconsciousness.

Berk

It had been mere minutes since Marko had been brought back to life, and he and Hiccup had disappeared by some mysterious white light. While Marko and Hiccup were gone, the survivors of Berk had started to clean up the dead bodies of Alvin's tribe: with the Dragons help, the Humans pushed the dead bodies into the water, and only hoped that the seas were as rough and dangerous as they could when the bodies hit the water. Rachel and Fradokos, two friends of Marko, were finding the keys of the cells and chains and started releasing the remaining of people who were still imprisoned. Sighing, Fradokos looked over to Rachel and said, "Hey, how're you holding up?" Rachel looked over at him, but Fradokos immediately looked away at the look

of her watery eyes: she had been like this ever since Marko, her new found love, had disappeared into the light. So, she assumed that you can't fight fate, and thought Marko had truly died. Shaking his head, Fradokos said, "He is coming back you know? Nothing can kill Marko."

Fradokos was suddenly turned around and had a dagger pressed against his neck, threatening to break skin. "Don't you DARE say his name!" shouted Rachel, pushing the dagger deeper into Fradokos' neck, letting a single drop of blood drip out of his neck. Fradokos gagged in response: even he had never seen Rachel this angry before. Sighing, Rachel took her dagger away from his neck and walked away from him, leaving Fradokos rubbing his neck, a surprised expression written on his face. Sighing shakily, Fradokos finished releasing the remaining prisoners, and when he just managed to release the last one when he heard a number of gasps coming from outside, so he went to investigate. When he got outside, he took a step back in shock.

There was a massive wall of white mist, blocking anything beyond it from the people on the other side. Suddenly, a figure-no, two figures-walked slowly through the mists: it was Hiccup and Marko! Cheering, the survivors and Dragon Riders ran towards Hiccup and Marko, and started to shake their hands and clap them on the back. When Fradokos reached Marko, Marko looked over to him and smiled. He then said, "Hope you like going on quests, 'cause that's what where gonna do!"

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2

"So, do you actually know where the Fire Key is?" asked Fradokos as He, Marko, Hiccup, Toothless and White Light headed towards the docks, where there was a single ship left that could take them to the Key of Fire. "Yeah," Marko responded, putting a hand of reassurance on Fradokos' shoulder, "just before me and Hiccup returned to Berk, I saw these words when I couldn't see, and they said..." Marko trailed off when he saw Rachel in front of him, carrying a backpack of supplies and with Cloud, her White Fury, at her side. "Oh, no. You're defiantly not going," said Marko sternly, gesturing at Rachel. Chuckling, Rachel turned around and headed towards the boat, calling back, "Not gonna happen, Marko!" Sighing, Marko had a small smile on his face, and he and the rest of them followed Rachel towards the boat. When they finally arrived at the docks, they could see their large boat docking at the far-most pier: it must have been a fishing boat, judging by the size of it.

Stepping on board, Marko quickly looked out to sea before returning to look at them and saying, "Ok, this is how it's going to happen: one of us is going to have to be in control of the boat, so is anyone going to volunteer?" Fradokos volunteered instantly: apparently, his mother was part of the fishing group on Molak. "So, now someone's in control of the boat, I'm guessing that we're gonna need someone to be in charge of medication, and-"

"That'll be me, then," came a voice behind them. Startled, Marko and Hiccup turned around and saw someone that they thought that they never see again: it was Astrid, her battle axe in one hand and a

backpack of supplies in the other. Hiccup stepped forward to try a feeble attempt to try and stop her from coming on board the boat, but Astrid said, "You're not going to stop me from getting on the boat, Hiccup. I'm not going to lose you again." That was all the convincing Hiccup needed: he stepped aside and let her walk onto the boat. Crossing his arms in front of him, Marko questioned, "A tell me why I should let you join us on this journey?" Swinging her axe onto her shoulder, Astrid said, "I'm a Viking: I think that's all the convincing that you're going to need." Shaking his head, Marko chuckled and said, "You'll have to think of something better than that." Smiling, Astrid suddenly dropped her backpack and, with lightning fast reactions, threw her axe at Marko; the others watching it spin through the air. But to everyone's shock, Marko caught the axe in mid-flight, the sharpened-head of the axe barely an inch from his face.

"Nice try, Viking," taunted Marko, dropping the axe onto the wooden floor of the boat. But then, Marko said, "Alright, then: you're in. But only because I might not be able to stop you trying to kill me next time." This caused the group to chuckle for a few minutes before Astrid put her supplies into the hull of the ship before she resurfaced and sat down on the side of the boat, with Hiccup sitting beside her. "OK, so now that's settled, I'll decide what the rest of us will have when we're a few days out," said Marko, and the group split and started exploring the boat that they would be calling 'home' for the next few weeks. Walking over to the side of the boat, Marko lent on the railing, and was quickly joined by Fradokos and Rachel on each of his sides. "So, do you really think that we'll be able to all four Keys AND make it back in one piece?" asked Fradokos, looking over at the people that he would be calling 'crew' for the next few weeks to months. Shrugging his shoulders, Marko replied, "Well, that would be telling, wouldn't it?" Chuckling, Fradokos said, "You really think we can pull this off, don't you?"

But Marko didn't answer: he just got up and started to undo one of the ropes that held the boat to the pier, but struggled to do so. "Ah, damn ropes...This is why I never got involved with anything to do with boats!" he muttered under his breath, when he suddenly felt a pair of hands cover his own and started to help him undo the knot. "Let me help you," whispered Rachel, and moved around Marko and undid the rope with littlest of effort. Chuckling nervously, Marko rubbed the back of his neck, and muttered, "Must be a girl thing..." Rachel faced him and said, "Mm-hm, you just keep telling yourself that," before giving him a quick kiss on the cheek. Smiling, Marko returned the kiss: he defiantly wasn't going to let anything happen to Rachel. They then heard an awkward cough coming from behind them, and they turned around to see Fradokos standing there, a smile spread across his face. Clearing his throat awkward, Marko said, "So, is everyone ready to go?"

Nodding, Fradokos said, "We've got enough food to last up for a few days, and enough fresh water to last us a while as well. But we've got to find an island with fresh water and edible food on it." Nodding, Marko let Rachel finish undoing the rest of the ropes while he and Fradokos went to make sure the rest of the group were holding up and ready to set sail. Scratching Toothless' head, Marko asked, "Are you ready for this, old friend?" Flashing Marko his signature toothless grin, Toothless said, "I'm ready for anything." Smiling, Marko walked away to check on Cloud and White Light. Meanwhile, below deck, in one of the cabins, Fradokos was checking to make sure

everything was in place and that Hiccup and Astrid were settling in well. "Hope you two have picked a room, 'because we're getting ready to go," said Fradokos as he entered their room to find Astrid placing her battle axe on the wall while Hiccup was pacing the room. They both stopped what they were doing and follow Fradokos out of the room and onto the deck of the ship.

As they arrived on board the deck of the ship, Rachel was just about to undo the last knot that was attached to the boat. Gripping one of the ropes that were attached to the sails, Marko, along with Fradokos' help, pulled the ropes and lifted the sails up. Rachel had just managed to undo the rope when the boat suddenly jerked forward, causing everyone to fall on their backs. Getting up, Marko saw the sails being pushed violently by strong winds away from Berk, and towards the open sea...

* * *

><p>So, there's a little love going on between Rachel and Marko...What do you think going to happen? Where is the Key of Life; well, someplace hot, yes! But what will they find along the way?

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3

It had been a few hours since Hiccup, Marko, Astrid and their friends had left Berk in search of the Key of Fire, and already, things weren't going so well: they had only now found out that Marko caught sea-sickness. There he would be, chucking up over the side of the ship, with Rachel trying to help him through it. "Is he any better?" asked Hiccup as he walked onto the deck, to which Rachel replied with a shake of her head. She then turned back to Marko, who had started another fit of vomiting. Surfacing for the other side of the boat, Marko, pale faced and looking as though he was just about to pass out, said, "This is...is why I nev...never got involv...volved in boats." His cheeks then expanded and he returned to the other the side of the ship, the familiar sound of vomiting in the air. Shaking his head, Hiccup returned down below deck, and made his way towards he and Astrid's room.

The boat itself was fairly big, but that didn't mean that it had enough room: there were only two rooms; and each of them was half full with supplies like water and food. One room was his and Astrid's, and the other was to be shared by Marko, Rachel and Fradokos in turn: it was planned that Marko would look after the boat every so often, and Fradokos and Rachel would sleep, and on other days, Fradokos would control the boat through the night, and Rachel and Marko would share the room. Tonight, it was planned that Fradokos would look after the boat, but Marko, who managed to stop being sick for a few seconds, said, "I'll guide the boat tonight: I need to get my sea-legs, anyway," before he returned to vomiting. So, with Marko in charge of the boat tonight, Hiccup and Astrid, along with Toothless, looked at the horizon, watching as the sun dipped below the sea.

Soon, the sun completely dipped below the horizon, and the sky filled with hundreds upon hundreds of stars, along with the crescent

moon, trying to be the one who stood out the most. Marko had managed to stop being sick and was standing next to the rudder of the boat, and said, "Alright, you lot head below deck and get some shut eye: I'll keep watch." Nodding, one by one, the Humans disappeared below deck; the Dragons were going to sleep at the front of the ship. Shivering slightly, Marko rubbed his hands together to try and warm them up. But it didn't help much: the wind was picking up, causing the mast of the ship to creak ominously above him. Shaking slightly, Marko let out a shaky breath and tried his best to keep himself warm. Suddenly, Rachel reappeared from below, carrying a large blanket and smiling. "I thought I told you to get some sleep," said Marko as she sat down next to him and wrapped the blanket around them both, and Marko instantly felt a wave of warmth wash over him.

"You really think that I'm going to leave you out here, alone, on a cold night?" asked Rachel quietly, as she leant against Marko, trying to get closer to him and share her warmth with him. Sighing, Marko rested his head on Rachel's, but she wasn't complaining. Sighing, Rachel quietly asked, "It's amazing how much has changed in the past few months, isn't it?" Nodding silently, Marko replied softly, "Yeah, it has...But I wouldn't change it for the world, not a second of it." Smiling, Rachel her head away from Marko and whispered, "Do you really think that we've got a chance of finding all the Keys." Shifting a bit, Marko said, "There's this saying my Auntie once told me, and it goes, 'As long as you have Faith in something, then all you need is a sign.'" Her smile widening slightly, Rachel replied, "Your Aunt's philosophy must have rubbed off on you." Chuckling lightly, Marko nodded. Silence then overlapped them, the two contempt with just being with each other.

Suddenly, Marko perked up and turned his head, as though he was listening to something. "Marko, wh-" Rachel started, but Marko silence her and got up, the blanket rolling down him and onto the wooden floor of the boat. Walking around silently, Marko kept turning his head constantly, as though he was trying to find something that he had just lost. Suddenly, he looked up, and the biggest smile that he had ever had on his face appeared on his face. Looking up, Rachel wanted to find out what Marko was so interested in. And when she did, Rachel let out a noticeable gasp in surprise. There, hovering above them was a White Fury; but this was no ordinary White Fury, for this one had icy blue eyes, just like Marko's...which meant only one thing...

"_ICE!" _shouted Marko, and Ice, purring and giving her best puppy dog eyes to Marko, lowered herself onto the boat. The instant she landed, Marko wrapped his arms around her neck, while Ice purred and rubbed her neck against his. Pulling back, Marko smiled and said, "_It has been a while, hasn't it, girl?"_ Purring louder, Ice gently tackled Marko, and started to cover his face with her saliva as she licked him. Laughing, Marko said, "_Alright, alright, I missed you too! I-Hey, what's that on your back?"_ Curling her scaly lips into a smile, Ice turned her head around and muttered to something on her back, and once she turned her head back around to face Marko, two blobs of grey scaled Dragons ran around her paws, cooing as they rubbed against her legs. Looking down at the Dragons at Ice's paws, Marko's eyes lit up as he said, "_Your kin...You're a mother, Ice!"_ Smiling, Ice looked behind her and saw the sleeping form of Toothless, curled up against the front of the boat, his chest rising and falling with each breath.

Walking up to her mate, Ice quietly said, _"Toothless...Toothless...Come on, wake up."_ Groaning softly, Toothless opened one of his eyes slightly and immediately opened both his eyes and got up at the sight of his mate. _"Ice!"_ Toothless purred as he rubbed his snout affectionately against Ice's. Crooning softly, Ice said, _"Toothless, I have a surprise for you..."_ Curious, Toothless looked around Ice, and his heart immediately melted at the sight of the two baby's, who where now hiding behind their mothers paws, wondering who this stranger was. _"Children, say hello to your father,"_ said Ice, and the two baby's, curious to find out if this strange Dragon was really their father, moved around their mother's paws and walked cautiously towards Toothless, sniffing as they went. Smiling, Toothless looked up to Ice and asked, _"What are their names?"_ Smiling softly, Ice said, _"Well, I was hoping to decide with you."_ Eyes widening, Toothless looked down at his children: he and Ice had to think of suitable names for them both. _"There both girls,"_ said Ice, and that narrowed down the ideas Toothless had.

Examining his children, Toothless noticed that one of them, who looked a bit bigger than her sibling, indication that she was first born, had gray eyes that blended in perfectly with her scales. Looking up at Ice again, Toothless said, _"How about Mist for this one?"_ as he pointed to the baby with the grey eyes. Looking down at the newly named Dragon, Ice smiled and nodded. Toothless looked over at the other baby, who had a taken a liking of Toothless' left forepaw, and he said, _"And how about Claw for this one?"_ Looking down at the second baby, Ice said, _"It suits her perfectly."_ Smiling, Toothless invited Ice and their children to return to his spot at the front of the boat, and soon, the recently reunited family was sleeping blissfully, Mist and Claw snuggling into the gap between their parents. Smiling at the family of Dragons, Marko returned to his seat, and was quickly joined by Rachel, who put the blanket back over them and kept their eyes on the horizon, desperately trying to keep their eyes open.

* * *

><p>So, Ice is reunited with Toothless, and the Night Fury finds out that he's a father: what perfect timing(!) Hope you all like this chapter, as always, please R&R

Nf991 signing out

4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4

Dawn broke over the sea, and the boat that was occupied by Marko, Hiccup, their Dragons and their friends was sailing smoothly across the shimmering blue water. Rubbing his eyes, Marko was trying his hardest to stay awake, but he was fighting a losing battle: his eyes were already threatening to close for a deep sleep. But just before he was completely out, the boat bumped into something and jolted Marko onto the floor of the boat, waking up Rachel and the Dragons. Yawning, Rachel got up and, kneeling down beside Marko, whispered, "Marko, wake up...Marko, we've his something..." But Marko just continued to lie there, muttering, "Mm, five more minutes..." Sighing, Rachel got up and looked over the side of the boat to see

what they had hit. Suddenly, she gasped and called, "Marko!" Groaning, the owner of the name slowly got up and walked towards Rachel, yawning, "What is it, Rach?" He too then looked over the side and, even though he was half asleep, his eyes widened and he called, "Alright, everyone! Rise and shine!"

They heard several bangs and groans coming from below them, indication that they had fallen out of their hammocks. After a few minutes of muffled grumbling, Hiccup, Astrid and Fradokos, who all still looked half asleep and flustered, arrived on board deck, and when they saw what Rachel and Marko saw, they instantly felt wide awake.

In front of them, standing fifty or possibly more feet above them stood a gigantic glacier, blocking the view in front of them and a good distance on either side of them. But that wasn't the strangest part of it; the strangest part was that there was an army of a dozen or so visible Vikings, all wielding some kind of weapon and had a fighting face plastered to their faces for entirety. Also, looming above the frozen Vikings, there was a Dragon frozen in the ice as well: it looked a bit bigger than a Night Fury, but it had burnt red scales covering it, with black scales covering its paws. It had four paws, and a pair of wings coming out of its back, a mixture of burnt red and black scales. There was a long neck connecting its body to its head, which was covered in spikes and burnt red scales. A bright orange almost burnt its way through the eyes as the two eyes seemed to follow them as they floated along. "What kind of Dragon do you think that is?" whispered Fradokos to Hiccup.

But before Hiccup could answer, Marko said, "That would be the cousin of the Monstrous Nightmare: The Demented Flame. There are hardly ever seen, but the ones who have seen them...Well, let's just say that they have a very good view of their claws." It didn't take a genius to know what Marko was talking about. _They must have a bad reputation,_ thought Hiccup as they slowly drifted along the glacier and out of the Flame's frozen eyesight. Turning around and walking towards the rudder of the ship, Marko gripped the handle and said, "This must be what the _Frozen _is, so that means that we go north until we find the Cave of Fury." And with that, Marko pulled the rudder towards him until he knew that he was pointing the boat north. As the boat drifted north and away from the Frozen Dragon and Vikings, Hiccup still couldn't get the image of those orange eyes out of his head: it was also as though they were...watching him. But Hiccup shrugged it off when he noticed that Ice was present of the boat for the first time. "Ice!" Hiccup exclaimed, and patted the snout of the White Fury, who purred in approval. Looking down, Hiccup spotted Claw and Mist looking up at him curiously, as though wondering if he was a threat to him or not.

"Hey there, little guys," Hiccup said softly, and slowly extended his hand to them. But Claw hissed and tried to get away from Hiccup, but Mist, the more curious of the two, sniffed Hiccup's hand before she rubbed her head against his palm, purring as she did so. Claw, now curious at her sister's reaction to the strange two-legged person, trotted forward and sniffed Hiccup's hand, before pushing her sister out of the way and seeing what it felt like. But before Claw could get a good fell of Hiccup's hand, Mist pushed her out of them way and hissed at her, telling her to back off. Soon, the two sister started to hiss at each other back and forth, until Claw started to make the Night Fury's signature screech, indication that she was about to fire

her first fireball. But before she could, Ice growled at her, indication her to stop what she was doing. Flattening her ears against the back of her head, Claw crooned softly in apology. Walking up to Ice, Toothless nuzzled her softly, and Ice returned it.

Smiling, Marko clasped his hands together and said, "Right, since it could be a while before we arrived at the Cave of Fury, so we each going to have to find a way of passing the time." Shrugging, Hiccup suggested, "Well, if it's alright with Toothless, I would like to go on a flight." Purring, Toothless lightly leapt on Hiccup, nuzzling his tiny face: they haven't been on a decent flight ever since..._he_ happened. Laughing, Hiccup looked to make sure that Toothless' fake tailfin (the one that allowed him to fly on his own) and before you could say 'Steal your left sock', Hiccup was on top of Toothless and the Night Fury shot up into the sky, becoming nothing more than a small dot in the sky moments later. Looking up at where Toothless appeared to be in the sky, Fradokos said "You know what; I think I'll join him." And with that, he mounted White Light and they too shot up into the sky. Laughing, Rachel went to ride on Cloud, but stopped when Marko made no movement towards Ice, who was lying down with Claw and Mist at her side. "Marko, w-what's wrong?" asked Rachel, slowly walking back to Marko. Looking at Rachel, Marko said, "Someone's got to look after the boat: besides, Ice needs her rest."

Looking over at Ice, Rachel was surprised to find that Ice had dozed off, her two children following her example. Smiling softly, Rachel mounted Cloud, but before they took off, Rachel looked over at Marko and said, "Just make sure that you keep that ship from being attacked by pirates!" Chuckling, Marko said sarcastically, "Oh, great(!) You just went a jinxed it!" Laughing, Rachel silently told Cloud to fly, and instantly, the two females shot up into the sky. Yawning, Astrid said, "Well, I'm going to get back to sleep, seeing as I had a rude awakening this morning!" Chuckling, Marko watched as Astrid disappeared below deck, and he was left as the only one awake on board. Sighing, Marko sat down at his point at the rudder of the boat, and pulled out the Earth Key from his pocket. Running his fingers over the golden side of the triangle, Marko muttered to himself, "What is the _Cave of Fury?"_ as though the Key would understand him.

* * *

><p>As I wrote this chapter, I suddenly thought of something: What could Ice and Marko's theme be? So, if you could leave any suggestions in your reviews, I could come up with something.

Nf991

5. Chapter 5

Chapter 5

The journey was relatively quiet towards the _Cave of Fury_, _seeing as the boat was only occupied by two humans and three Dragons, and seeing as Astrid was sleeping and so was Ice, Claw and Mist; so Marko thought the time passed rather quickly when they arrived at the Cave. Calling the others back down, who had followed the boat from the air,

and when they landed back onto the boat, which caused Ice and her cubs to wake up, they saw what was blocking the off.

In front of them stood what looked like a massive entrance to a cave, but it had what appeared to be stone teeth coming out of the floor and roof of the entrance, making it look like a giant mouth of a beast. Looking around the entrance, which was surrounded by sea, Marko suddenly went rigged and said, "Look!" As he pointed to the entrance of the cave, Hiccup saw what he thought was what Marko saw: a little girl, looking no older than eight, waving her hand frantically to try and get their attention. "We got to help her!" shouted Fradokos and went to turn the rudder, but Mark blocked him and said, "No, we head south-east until we reach the Key." But Fradokos didn't listen; he pushed Marko's arm out of the way, and turned the rudder, saying, "I'm not going to stand here and watch that little girl die!" And with that, the boat started to move towards the cave. Sighing, Marko said, "Fine! Just don't say I didn't warn you!" Confused, Hiccup asked, "What d'you mean?" But Marko shook his head, and replied, "You'll see."

Soon, they arrived at the mouth of the cave. Jumping from the boat to the rocky entrance, Fradokos entered the cave first, and called back, "Hey, there's some torches here!" No sooner had he said that, that an orange light filled the cave. Soon, Hiccup, Rachel and Astrid jumped off the boat as well and landed in the cave, but Marko made no movement towards it. "I'm not taking a step in there, and that's final!" he had said, and went below deck and out of sight. Sighing, Fradokos handed each of the others a torch and they entered the main body of the cave, trying to find the girl. As they entered the cave, they noticed that there were at least three tunnels in the back of the cave, leading to different parts of the cave system. "Hello?" called Fradokos, causing the sound to echo loudly throughout the cave and tunnels. "You two go in that tunnel," ordered Fradokos, pointing at Astrid and Hiccup and the tunnel on the left hand side. "Me and Rachel will take the other two," Fradokos added. Nodding in understanding, Astrid and Hiccup made their way towards the tunnel, while Fradokos and Rachel made their way towards their ones.

Astrid and Hiccup

As Astrid and Hiccup entered the tunnel and blocked everything on either side of them, all they could hear was the ominous wind rushing through the entrance behind them, and the slowly **drip-drop ** of water, falling from the ceiling and onto the floor, forming puddles. "Do you really think that girl's down here?" asked Hiccup quietly, looking around as they moved deeper into the tunnel. Astrid, who gaze with fixed on the tunnel ahead shrugged and said, "Maybe; but there's one thing that's still bugging me, though." Stopping, Hiccup looked at her and asked, "And what would that be?" Looking at Hiccup with a serious expression on her face, and said, "Why didn't Marko want to come in here? After he dragged us all out here on this joy ride to Thor knows where, and he won't come in a cave? He HAS to be hiding something." Now that Hiccup thought about it, Marko had been keeping some of his secrets close to his chest lately: he didn't even tell them straight away about Black Ash...But Hiccup shook his head and said, "Look, Marko has his reasons. If he has things that he doesn't want to tell, he doesn't have to..." Hiccup trailed off as he saw something move in the dark in front of them. The thing must have seen them as well, because the next thing Hiccup knew, it was running down the tunnel. "C'mon!" said Hiccup, and he ran towards the figure,

leaving a confused Astrid in his wake.

As Hiccup gave chase, he saw the figure dart into a side tunnel, and Hiccup turned as well. But Astrid, who had only now caught up with him, didn't see him turn the corner, so continued on, deeper into the tunnel. As Astrid wandered farther into the tunnel, Hiccup looked around the tunnel he went down, searching for the darkened figure that ran from him. "Hello? Little girl?" Hiccup called, but the only respond he got was the echo of his own voice. Suddenly, he saw something ran through the darkness and into another tunnel. Taking a deep breath, Hiccup followed the figure. As he neared the entrance of the tunnel, Hiccup pressed himself against the side of the tunnel he was in, and after a moment hesitation, he walked into the tunnel, only to find that it was a small cave, and then he saw something that made his eyes widen and caused him to drop his torch.

There was the form of Astrid, lying in the centre of the room, a pool of blood surrounding her stomach, where a large gash was. He saw that her eyes had misted over and she had a pained expression on her cold and lifeless face. "Astrid?" Hiccup whispered, taking a step towards her and kneeling down beside her. He placed his hand on her forearm, and instantly felt the freezing coldness come off her, but he pushed that thought into the back as he shook her gently, trying to tell himself that she was just in a sort of deep sleep. But when she didn't stir, Hiccup felt his eyes starting to water as he placed his now shaky hand back at his side. Hiccup let out a dry sob as he dropped his head, mumbling, "I'm so sorry...so sorry," over and over again to his dead girlfriend. Suddenly, he heard a voice come from behind him and caused him to become shocked and confused.

"Hiccup?" said Astrid, walking into the cave where Hiccup knelt, holding her torch aloft to see what he was doing. She saw him kneeling over the form a someone who looked like...her. The person looked like her in every detail: from her eyes colour to the clothes she was wearing, all be it without the gash or the blood surrounding her. Hiccup turned his head to look at her, and immediately stood up and ran to her, hugging her as he said, "Astrid!? But...how?!" He turned around to look at the dead 'Astrid', but when he looked at the spot where the body lay...it wasn't there anymore: there wasn't even any blood, not one drop on the ground. Slowly turning his head back to face Astrid, Hiccup stuttered, "Y-Y-You did see that, right?" Looking over Hiccup's shoulder, Astrid nodded slowly. "I warned you," came the echo of a voice from behind them.

Yelping in shock, Astrid and Hiccup turned around, to find Marko standing at the entrance of the cave, holding a torch in one hand and a sword in the other. He bore a blank expression on his face, making it impossible for Hiccup or Astrid to tell what he was thinking. "You knew about this sort of stuff?" questioned Hiccup, letting go of Astrid and walking towards Marko. "If by 'sort of stuff', you mean being able to show you you're worst fear, then yes." Hiccup shook his head, and asked, "How?" Walking around Hiccup, Marko stopped at the point where the dead 'Astrid' had been, and ran his hand over the cold stone, and answered, "This place isn't just called 'Cave of Fury'; it is also called 'Loki's Dwelling' or 'The Tricksters' Cavern'. Basically, this place is Loki's place of illusion: something about this place causes people to see the thing that scares them the most or their worst fear coming to life." Looking at the spot where the dead 'body' had been, Hiccup asked, "What was yours?" Marko's face stiffened as Hiccup asked that.

"C'mon, we've got to get back to the ship," said Marko, ignoring Hiccup's question completely. He then got up and exited the cave, saying, "I've already ran into Rachel and Fradokos: I told them to meet us back at the ship." And with that, Marko led the other two back towards the ship.

6. Chapter 6

Chapter 6

As Marko, Astrid and Hiccup walked back towards the boat through the tunnels that they had walked through. With Marko leading, they arrived at the point from which they started and ran into Fradokos and Rachel, who just came out of their tunnels as well. Nodding at Fradokos and Rachel, Marko led them towards the mouth of the cave, but stopped just before they stepped into the water. "Marko, what-" Fradokos started, but Marko silenced him and pointed to outside the cave. Looking through the gap that Marko was looking through and their eyes widened at the sight: pirates were boarding their boat. Through the gap, they could see the pirate's ship next to theirs, and it was only the slightest bit bigger than their one. They could also see only a handful of men, about ten or fifteen at the most, but they were all armed to the teeth and looked pretty intimidating. Hiccup's eyes then landed on one of the pirates who appeared to be the captain: he was wearing a dirty brown tricorne with a just as dirty brown overcoat with a cutlass on either of his sides. He had dark blue eyes and a scar running over one of his eyes.

"Wonder who that is," mumbled Astrid, but at the moment, Hiccup looked over at Marko, Fradokos and Rachel, all of whom were wearing similar faces of anger and something that told Hiccup that the trio of Furies knew who that pirate was. Marko then walked through the gap between the rocks, causing Fradokos to hiss, "Marko! What are you doing?!" Marko didn't answer, but walked to the very edge of the rocks and shouted, "Hello, Sinbad!" Startled, the pirate crew all went for their cutlasses and when to charge at Marko, but the captain raised a hand to signal them to stop. Once he lowered his hand, the ship slowly moved towards the rocks where Marko was. When the ship lightly bumped into the rocky cave entrance, the one Marko called 'Sinbad' stepped onto the side of the ship and landed on the same rock that Marko stood, although he was closer to the edge than Marko was. "It's been a time since I used that name, Marko," muttered Sinbad, but a smile slowly appeared onto his scarred face. Marko, however, didn't smile and said, "So, what do you answer to now then?"

The smile that was on Sinbad's face slowly left his face and he mumbled, "It's nice to see you too, Brother(!)" He then noticed that there were Fradokos, Rachel, Hiccup and Astrid hiding behind the stone teeth of the Cave entrance. "Well, I know Fradokos and Rachel, but who are the other two?" Sinbad asked Marko, who turned around and looked at the four friends behind him. Nodding his head, Marko gestured for them to come out and greet this 'friend' of his. Once they managed to squeeze onto the medium-sized rock platform "which was only just big enough to hold them all on it" Sinbad said, "Long time no see, Fradokos, as well as you Rachel," greeted Sinbad, but Fradokos and Rachel didn't react, but gave him looks that told him to not talk to them. Sighing, Sinbad curled his mouth into a

smirk and asked, "What are you doing here, Brother?" Marko looked Sinbad in the eye and said, "Do not call me 'Brother', Sinbad." Sighing, Sinbad asked, "I'll ask you again: 'What are you doing out here?'" Hiccup noticed that he didn't add on 'Brother' at the end of his question.

Not looking at Sinbad, but over his shoulder, Marko answered, "Just doing some travelling. Nothing wrong with that, is there?" Sinbad smirked in a strange way, before saying, "No, it isn't. Only problem is that you've wandered into my territory of the sea." Once he said that, two of the pirates grabbed Astrid and Rachel, while another two grabbed Fradokos and Hiccup. As they dragged them, kicking and screaming, onto the boat, Marko looked at Sinbad with venom and said "Let them go! NOW!" But Sinbad merely chuckled and said, "Oh, Marko: there's a fire inside of you, but you are afraid of using it. After all, that is how you killed Molak, isn't it?" Marko froze, curious to how he knew about the..._incident _and furious that he dared to use Molak's name. Laughing at the White Fury's confusion, Sinbad said, "Word travels fast out here on the open sea, Marko." Turning around, Sinbad returned to the boat, before saying, "Bring him on board as well." No sooner had he said that, two other pirates went to grab Marko, but Marko wasn't going down without a fight. When he knocked out the first pirate with an upper cut to the jaw, the other pirate sneaked around Marko and, using the handle of the sword, knocked Marko out by hitting him in the back of the neck. Before Marko could slump into the floor, the pirate grabbed him and threw him onto the ship, before picking up the knocked out pirate and made his way onto the boat.

When Marko was placed into the hull of Sinbad's boat, along with the others, one of the pirates asked, "What shall we do with their boat, sir?" Looking over at the Viking's boat, Sinbad saw nothing of value on the deck of the boat, but didn't want to waste any more time with this. "Leave it: there's nothing of value on board that," Sinbad replied, and made his way to the wheel of the boat. Nodding, the pirate said, "Yes, sir," before entering the hull of the boat. As one of the pirates hoisted the colours-a skull and crossed bones on a black sheet of cloth-another took the wheel that connected to the rudder of the boat and turned it around, heading for open water.

Toothless and Ice

As they watched the pirate boat leave into open water up on the cliff that they had only just managed to reach before the pirates came into view, Toothless, Ice, Claw, Mist and the other Dragons started to think about how they could get their riders back. _"We must storm the boat!" _screamed Cloud, but Toothless put down that idea instantly, saying, _"We cannot do that, Cloud: they might kill them before we even get near to the boat." _White Light, who hadn't spoken much during the whole trip, said, _"Go on then, Shadow: who do you think we should do?" _Growling lightly at White Light, Toothless looked over to make sure that Ice was fine, along with his children, before turning back to White Light and Cloud and replying, _"We follow them and we wait. We wait until the moment is right before we act. Until then, we follow them, and see if they lead us to our destination." _

><p>So, an old 'friend' of Marko's returns, but what will happen to our band of heros? Will they make it to the Key of Fire?

****I'll upload the next chapter as soon as I can so you can find out!****

****Nf991****

7. Chapter 7

Chapter 7

The sun slowly started to dip below the sky as Sinbad's boat sailed smoothly across the seemingly never-ending ocean. Said captain had told his crew that he had gone to rest in his quarters, but what he really wanted to do was head down to the lower decks without arousing suspicion from the crew. So, quick as a rat leaving a sinking ship, Sinbad slipped down to below deck without any member of the crew turning a head. Chuckling, Sinbad took both of his cutlasses from around his sides and placed them on a hook that he saw at the start of the corridor that led to the rest of the lower decks. Walking along, Sinbad stopped at the third door and opened it, not worrying about the occupant trying to escape. Once he was in, he turned around and closed the door, and he then lit a candle that was on a small table near the door. As light poured out into the once darkened room, Sinbad saw the form of Marko, chained at the wrists to the wall, looking at him with a mixture of a disgusted and a pity look on his face.

Sinbad walked over to Marko, before kneeling down in front of him and asking, "How long has it actually been, Marko? Eight, maybe ten months?" Marko didn't answer: he just looked at the floor around Sinbad's feet. Sighing, Sinbad got up again, but stopped when he noticed a small bowl of water that was within reach of Marko. "A girl gave it me: black hair, brown eyes, fiery personality?" Marko tried to describe, and Sinbad smirked and said, "That would be Natalie: she's my first mate, as well as the first one of my crew that I've rescued from death or a horrible life, 'for the scurvy life on board deck!'" Sinbad put on a fake pirate voice for the last part, trying to get a smile to form on Marko's stone-like face. But it didn't work: Marko just continued to look at him with a cold expression. Sighing, Sinbad shook his head and said, "Come on, Marko: give us a smile. Don't you remember when we would go around Molak, messing about and acting like brothers? Like true blood brothers?" Marko looked up at what Sinbad had just said, but all he said was, "I gave up on memories like that a long time ago." Sighing, Sinbad got up and made his way towards the door, saying, "Just thought I'd let you know Marko: we've found something in the sea. We thought you might want to take a look at it." Thinking it over, Marko was silent for a few minutes, before nodding and waited while Sinbad undid the chains around his wrists.

Rubbing his wrists, which were raw red, Marko followed Sinbad out of the room he was being held in and down the corridor. Coming out on board deck, Sinbad found that more of the crew were up, attending to the jobs on board. The crew shot disgusted looks at Marko and some even slowly made their way towards the weapons stack. Sighing, Sinbad muttered to Marko, "There are a few drawbacks with this job," before

stepping forward and spoke so the rest of the crew could hear, "Gentlemen, and lady," at this point, Marko noticed that Natalie, the young woman who gave him water, was standing near the front of the boat, looking curiously at Marko and Sinbad. Sinbad continued, "I understand that we've found something off the starboard bow. Mr. Smith, show our friend what we've found." Mr. Smith, a medium built man with an eye patch over his left eye, with a thin scar above and below that eye patch, turned around for a moment and threw a large fishing net at Marko and Sinbad, but this was something different about this net: it looked as though there was something in it...

Kicking away some of the net covering a large, black lump that was in the net, Marko looked at the unmoving lump with anger as his hands screwed into fists. "If you have any common sense or respect, you will dump that...thing overboard and leave it to the mercy of the sea!" shouted Marko, walking away from the nets and back down below deck. Sinbad looked at where Marko was heading, and back to the rotten-skinned body that was covered in fish nets. Sinbad saw half of the flesh covering the face was rotten and some of it was still peeling off, and he could partly see the chinbone of the being through the peeled and peeling skin. Sinbad could also see that the left hand was completely bare from skin: he could clearly see the bones barely holding themselves together with some of the remanding skin that was at the joints of the fingers. He then looked into the faded eyes of the, you couldn't call it 'human', but the...thing, and he saw the distant blood-lust of the nearly completely faded red eyes. Kneeling down next to the decaying body, Sinbad said, "Well, you heard him: throw him overboard. He's obviously not alive; no-one could be alive after this." Nodding, Smith and another member of the crew, a well built man with a thin black beard, grabbed the fishing nets and threw them back into the sea, leaving the decaying body of the Demon to the mercy of the sea.

Getting up, Sinbad jogged down the corridor Marko went down; he failed to noticed, as he entered the corridor, that one of his cutlasses was missing, and one of the slings was discarded on the floor. As he entered the room where Marko had been chained, Sinbad called, "Marko? Who was that? What happened to him?" But Sinbad's questions went unanswered, until Marko walked out of the shadows that formed in the corner of the room. Marko hissed, "Why did you even bring that...that thing aboard?! If you don't put it overboard, I'll-" Sinbad cut him off by saying, "We have already done so, Marko." Marko was silent for a few seconds, before saying, "Good. Because, if you didn't..." Marko pulled the cutlass he had taken from the hook in the corridor and pointed it at Sinbad, slowly advancing on him. Sinbad, pressed against the wooden wall of the room, didn't speak. Chuckling, Marko spun the cutlass around in his hand offered the handle of the sword to Sinbad, who accepted it and put it onto the table with the candle on. "Let me ask you something, Marko," said Sinbad, to which Marko nodded as a sign to ask him the question. "Who was that? The person in the net?" asked Sinbad and he could see Marko's hands screw into fists temporarily, before relaxing them and saying, "That was a Demon from the fiery pits of Hell. He was a monster: nothing more, and nothing less."

Before Sinbad could try and get another response out of Marko, Mr. Smith ran into the room, saying, "Captain! Rival pirates, off the port bow!"

8. Chapter 8

Chapter 8

Sinbad walked quickly down the corridor of his ship, followed by Marko, who was silent because he knew that his...comrade needed to focus on what to do with the pirates that were about to pass his ship. As they passed the hook at the entrance of the corridor, Sinbad grabbed the one cutlass that was still on the hook and slung it around his shoulder; Marko then picked up the sheath that was discarded on the floor. "What are you going to do about the other pirates?" asked Marko, handing Sinbad the other sheath, to which Sinbad took it without speaking and slid the other cutlass into it, before putting it around his shoulder. Sinbad clearly didn't hear what Marko had just said: he was too busy giving orders to the different members of the crew. He ordered some of them to grab as many swords as they could and hand them out to the crew, while another pirate was pulling frantically at a rope that was attached to the mast, pulling up the Jolly Roger "a skull and cross bones on a black background" until it was at the very top of the mast.

Marko then looked out to sea, and saw, for the first time, the rival pirate ship that was steaming towards them in the darkening sky and water. Marko found the whole structure of the ship slightly different to that of Sinbad's ship: their ship, for starters, had several sails instead of Sinbad's single flag. The flags of the other ship also looked like they could be folded up, seeing as there were creases running the length of the sails. The wooden base of the ship was a bit larger than Sinbad's ship, and it had a carved out image of a mermaid, acting as though she was hanging onto the ship itself. "Singapore pirates," Marko heard Sinbad mutter as the ship drew ever nearer. Soon, the pirate ship travelling towards Sinbad and Marko slowed to a stop, and a few seconds after they reached their ship, their anchor dropped from the side of the boat and into the depths of the sea. The Singapore pirates were gathered on the side of their ship that was facing Sinbad's ship, with some of the holding swords and daggers, while others were holding a sword in one hand, and a torch in the other. Then, Marko saw the person who appeared to be the captain of the ship; judging by how he was at the rudder of the boat and was slowly walking towards the rest of the pirates, he hand resting lightly on the sword at his side.

"Ah, Captain _Simbad_," shouted the Captain of the Singapore pirates, his accent coming through as he spoke. Growling slightly, Sinbad called back, "It's not _Sim_bad, it is SINbad!" The Captain of the Singapore boat just laughed loudly, and said, "Forgive me, _Sim_bad(!) I am simply here to collect what is mine." Pulling out one of his swords and pointing it at the Singapore Captain threateningly, Sinbad shouted, "That Spanish gold was mine, and you know it!" Chuckling loudly, the Singapore Captain pulled one of his swords out of its sheath and lifted it up, shouting, "Pirates! Attack!" Shouting and shoving planks of wood to cover the gap between their boat and Sinbad's, the Singapore pirates ran across the planks and landed on Sinbad's boat, where they were instantly attacked by Sinbad's crew. Grabbing the collar of Sinbad's overcoat, Marko said, "We need to talk," before dragging him down into the lower decks of the ship while the battle continued. But he didn't notice that Natalie, once she slit the throat of one of the Singapore pirates, followed them down the corridor. When Sinbad and Marko reached the

final door at the end of the corridor, Marko pushed Sinbad into the door, opening it and causing him to be thrown inside.

"Alright, start talking," demanded Marko, walking into the room, only to find that it was the room that was holding Hiccup, Astrid, Rachel and Fradokos: each of them had their hands tied behind their backs and a black piece of cloth wrapped around their mouths, preventing them from speaking. They're eyes widened when they saw Sinbad being thrown in and Marko walking in the room. Marko picked Sinbad up and pressed him against the wall, saying, "What's this about Spanish gold?" Sighing, Sinbad said, "Look, I'm a pirate now: it's what we do!" Shaking his head, Marko was about to let Sinbad go when he saw movement out of the corner of his eye. With reactions like lightning, Marko pulled out the other sword in Sinbad's sheath and turned around, blocking Natalie's dagger. Smirking, Marko said, "Hello, Natalie: I know your name now." But even Marko could take away the fact that Natalie's eyes were burning with anger. She then said, with her Eastern accent coming through, "You have no respect for the Captain! Why shouldn't I gut you like a fish?" Chuckling, Marko lifted his sword up, in turn, lifting up Natalie's dagger as well. The dagger flew out of its owner's hand, and Marko caught it in his own. He then crossed the dagger and the sword in front of Natalie's throat. "Name one reason why I shouldn't gut you like a fish?" Marko asked smugly, causing Natalie to fume in anger.

Marko then lowered the crossed blades and handed the dagger back to Natalie, who snatched it out of his hands before placing it in her belt. She then, not taking her eyes off Marko, walked around Marko and stood next to Sinbad, saying, "Are you alright, Captain?" Sighing, Sinbad placed a hand on her shoulder and said, "I'm alright, Natalie. But now, we need to keep those Singapore pirates away from the gold!" As Sinbad exited the room, Marko cut the ropes around his friends' wrists and took off the gags around their mouths. "Are you all alright?" asked Marko, to which all of them nodded in response. Nodding, Marko noticed that he still had the sword he swiped from Sinbad in his hand. Smiling, he swung the sword around a couple of times before tightening his grip on the sword and said, "I'm going to go help them out." Rachel then said, "Oh no, you're not! You've almost died not a week ago; I'm not letting you die again!" Sighing, Marko placed his hand on Rachel's shoulder, and looked her in the eye and smiled. He then said, "Nice try: that isn't gonna work this time." He then ran out the room and closed the door, before the others heard the sound of something being pushed in front of the door. "MARKO!" shouted Rachel, running up to the door and pounding her fists on it, but the door didn't budge. "Sorry," came Marko's muffled reply, "but I'm not risking my life as well as yours!" Pressing her eyes against the door, Rachel heard running footsteps moving away from them.

"He is going to pay," muttered Rachel, pounding her fist on the door once more before walking away and joined the other three.

* * *

><p>So, liking the story so far?

As always, please R&R!

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9. Chapter 9

Chapter 9

Marko ran out onto deck, and instantly had to block a blow to the head from a Singapore pirate. Marko pushed the sword back up and kicked the pirate, causing him to stumble and fall over the edge of the boat and a loud ****SPLASH **** to ring out from the sea. Looking over the edge momentarily, Marko got a glimpse of the drenched pirate, before looking around the deck for Sinbad. Soon, he spotted him: he was currently facing off two Singapore pirates at once, not fighting one for more than five seconds before moving onto the next one. Dodging rival pirates, Marko slowly moved forward to assist his... 'Brother', if he could still call them that. Finally, after blocking several blows from several different pirates, Marko reached Sinbad and started to assist him by taking on the pirate that Sinbad wasn't fighting at the moment. "Why are you here?!" shouted Sinbad, blocking a blow from the rival pirate and returned it with one of his own. "Just because we're not Brothers anymore, doesn't mean we don't look after each other," replied Marko, throwing several swings of his sword to the rival pirate, who was slowly backing up. Smirking, Sinbad finally killed the pirate by stabbing him in the stomach. As the pirate fell, to the wooden floor of the boat, Sinbad wiped the blood off his sword onto the pirates' clothes. Sinbad then moved on to help Marko, who was easily a match for the Singapore pirate.

"So," grunted Sinbad, trying to draw the sword of the rival pirate to him so Marko could go in for the kill," How long do you think before we drive them away?" Chuckling, Marko, his sword just barely touching the pirate, replied, "Well, when we take out the Captain, we should easily be able to finish them." Laughing heartily, Sinbad finally drew the sword of the pirate long enough for Marko to slice through the pirates' chest like it was made of butter. As the pirate died of blood loss, Sinbad and Marko moved onto two other pirates. But before they could reach them, the pirate of the Singapore ship stood in front of them, a wicked smile on his thin face. "You are not slipping out of my grasp this time, Simbad!" he said, drawing a golden-handled sword from its sheath. At this point, Marko took in some of the details of the Singapore Captain: he had a black bandana wrapped around his neck, completely blocking the top of his head and base of his hair from view. He also had golden-colour silk sewed into a pattern on his top of trousers, indicating that he had access to vast amounts of wealth. He also had a short shoulder cape over his right shoulder. "Marko, this is between me and him: you protect your friends," ordered Sinbad as he and the Singapore Captain started to circle each other.

Nodding, Marko turned around and returned down the corridor, leaving Sinbad's crew to face the Singapore pirates alone, but there were only about twenty Singapore pirates left, and nearly half of them were still on the ship. "Ready to become shark food, Pirate?" asked Sinbad, as he started to attack the Singapore pirates with a series of well-aimed blows. As Sinbad faced off against the Singapore Captain and his crew, Marko jogged down to the room where he had locked the rest of his friends in to prevent them from getting injured. When he got to the door, he pressed his ear against the door to try and see if they were alright. But after a few seconds, Marko heard a loud, "Hi-ya!" before he felt the door fall to the floor,

with him going with it. Grunting, Marko slowly pushed the broken door off of him, only to see a panting Rachel standing a few feet behind where the door used to be, with Fradokos, Hiccup and Astrid standing behind her. Gulping quietly, Marko slowly got up and, wiping himself clean of a few splinters that were still attached to him, said, "Look, Rach, I locked you in there for a reason." But Rachel didn't listen to him; she pushed him softly against the wooden wall on the other side of the corridor and whispered, "Just don't do that again, OK?" Shaking slightly, Marko nodded quietly.

Nodding in satisfaction, Rachel stepped away from Marko and back into the room, calling, "Come in here a minute, Marko, I got to show you something." Curious, Marko slowly followed her into the room. He watched as Rachel walked into the very corner of the room and gesturing for Marko to come and look at something. After a bit of thought, Marko shrugged his shoulders and walked over to the corner that Rachel was standing at. Looking over her shoulder, Marko's eyes widened at the sight of several brown sacks, each filled with mountains of gold coins, gold cups and many other golden items. One of the sacks had fallen over and almost a quarter of its contents were spilled onto the floor of the room. Kneeling down next to the sack that had spilled, Marko muttered, "Well, this could help us along with our travels..." He then pushed his hands into the depths of the pile and pulled them back out, looking at the mass of coins that he had grabbed. But before he could put them somewhere safe, Rachel knocked them out of his hands, saying, "Are you mad?! You're stealing from pirates!" Shrugging, Marko started to pick up the coins again, saying, "Well, it isn't really stealing if it's from pirates: after all, they're the ones who stole it in the first place." Sighing, Rachel watched as Marko started to stuff his front pockets with coins, all the while, looking over his shoulder to make sure none of Sinbad's crew entered while he was doing this.

After a while, Fradokos, and Astrid followed Marko's example, by walking over to the same corner and loading their pockets and any other space that was not being used with as many coins as they could fit; Hiccup just stood there awkwardly, not wanting to steal, even if it was from pirates. "Uh, guys, do you really think we should be doing this?" Hiccup asked, but he didn't get an answer as the three of them continued to load their pockets with Spanish gold. Sighing, Hiccup joined Rachel, who was standing next to the door to keep a look out for any pirates, Sinbad's or Singapore's, in case they came down to check on the Spanish gold. Soon, Marko, Fradokos and Astrid returned to them, their pockets filled to bursting with gold. Nodding, Marko quietly led them out of the room and down the corridor, trying desperately to avoid any creaky floorboards. Soon, they arrived at the entrance of the corridor, just in time to see Sinbad sticking his sword straight through the Singapore's Captain's gut so it was sticking out of his lower back. The Singapore Captain gagged loudly, before Sinbad pushed him off his sword so he landed onto the wooden floor of the boat with a dull **THUD!** Once he wiped off the blood on his sword onto the body of another dead Singaporean pirate. Looking around, Marko was surprised to find the Sinbad and his crew had managed to kill every single member of the Singapore crew, even the ones who stayed on the boat.

"So, not that they're out of the way," started Sinbad, walking over a dead pirate and towards Marko, "is there anything that you might need?" Thinking, Marko secretly looked over at the now abandoned pirate ship next to them. Looking back over at Sinbad, Marko said, "I

wish to take the Singapore pirate's ship, for me and my friends are in the middle of searching for something of great...value."

10. Chapter 10

Chapter 10

Dawn slowly broke across the calm sea that had Sinbad's and the Singaporean ships next to each other, tethered by several ropes and a few planks of wood. Aboard Sinbad's ship, in the last room of the corridor, Hiccup and Astrid were getting ready to leave Sinbad's ship and board the Singapore boat, along with Marko, Fradokos and Rachel; who were already on deck of Sinbad's boat, saying their last goodbyes. "How long do you think before we find that Key?" asked Astrid, making her way to the door, quickly followed by Hiccup. Shrugging, Hiccup said, "Well, we don't actually know how far we've travelled from the Cave of Fury, so it could take a while before we finally find it." Nodding in agreement with Hiccup, Astrid, along with Hiccup, exited the room and walked down the corridor to say their final goodbyes to Sinbad and his crew.

As soon as they exited the corridor, they had to block their eyes to avoid blinding themselves from the recently-risen sun. As soon as their eyes adjusted to the light, Astrid and Hiccup lowered their eyes and saw the entire crew preparing for the Vikings and the White Furies to leave their ship. Sinbad was shaking both his hands with Marko's single hand in-between; Rachel and Natalie were walking down the side of the ship, talking away like old friends, and Fradokos was walking across one of the planks of wood with a barrel of water over his shoulder, and when he stepped down on the Singapore ship, he handed it to Smith, who then rolled it down to the main hull of the ship. "It was good to see you, old friend," said Sinbad, finally letting go of Marko's hand. Marko smiled and replied, "The same with you, Sinbad." Laughing heartily, Sinbad clasped his hand onto Marko's shoulder and started to remember old tales to Marko, to which Marko laughed out loud. Smiling at the old friends, Hiccup and Astrid walked towards one of the planks and walked across it. Once they were across, Hiccup and Astrid walked down the corridor that led to below deck.

The ship was even bigger than their old Viking one, and even slightly larger than Sinbad's. The walls of the corridor had very expensive looking red silk running over the doors to different rooms, and there were several very small torches at foot-level lining the corridor. **That's definitely a fire risk,** thought Hiccup, but he didn't say anything. As they approached the final door on the left side of the corridor, Hiccup opened the door and he and Astrid walked in. When he closed the door, Hiccup was gazing in wonder at the mountains of golden items lining the wall of the room. There was everything and anything that could be there: there were also several golden cups standing proud next to each other on two shelves over one another; there was a few solid gold statues standing tall on the ground, almost reaching the lowest shelf on the wall. Even the floor was covered in expensive looking carpets and rugs. Shaking his head in disbelief, Hiccup noticed something in the corner of the room that didn't go with the rest of the theme: a small wooden crate. Curious, Hiccup walked towards the wooden crate, with Astrid slowly following him.

Once the crate was at his feet...uh, foot..., Hiccup bent down and opened the door of the box, but his hope of finding anything of value in the box was thrown away: all that was in the crate was a few bits of broken swords and something wrapped up in a piece of dirty cloth. _Wait, something in a dirty cloth?_ Hiccup thought, and picked up the loosely wrapped object and examined it. After a few moments, Hiccup gently took off the cloth surrounding the object and dropped the cloth to the floor. What was in his hands intrigued him: it appeared to be a small black box, with a couple of images engraved into the sides of the small box. Slowly, Hiccup unhooked a lock that was attached to the front of the small box, and he slowly lifted the lid, to find that the small box was nothing more than a broken compass; he figured it was broken because it wasn't pointing north, seeing as the compass point was pointing in the direction Astrid was standing, which was not north. Sighing, Hiccup turned around to face Astrid and he said, "It's nothing special: just a busted compass." Handing it to Astrid, Hiccup could've sworn that it started to move, but his eyes must've been playing tricks on him. Taking the compass from him, Astrid twisted it around for a few seconds, and, frowning, said, "Well, you got that right; this thing isn't even pointing north!" Nodding, Hiccup took it back from Astrid, but this time, something happened that really confused him. When Astrid gave him the compass back, she walked out of the room, and from the moment she moved, the compass point moved with her; like it was tracking her.

"Astrid! Can you come back in here for a moment?" asked Hiccup, and Astrid came back into the room. Handing her the compass, Hiccup said, "Tell me if anything happens to the compass when I move, OK?" Once Astrid had nodded, Hiccup started to pace around the room, waiting to see if anything happened. Suddenly, Astrid's eyes widened and she said, "It's following you!" Nodding, Hiccup moved next to Astrid, so the compass was pointing directly at him. Shaking his head, Hiccup said, "This just gets weirder and weirder as we go along." Nodding, Astrid silently agreed with him, and the two just stayed silent, amazed by their new discovery. Suddenly, they heard several shouts from outside the boat. Curious, Astrid exited the treasure room, quickly followed by Hiccup, once he had wrapped the 'magic' compass back in its cloth and put it into his back pocket. Once they exited the room and moved onto the main deck, Fradokos and Rachel gently pushed the back and told them to be quiet. Looking on Sinbad's boat, they could easily see what had happened; one of Marko's pockets, which was easily over-loaded with stolen gold, had burst, spilling golden coins all over the deck of Sinbad's ship. The crew, including Sinbad, didn't look to happy about finding out that Marko had stolen from them, judging by many of them drawing swords and throwing angered looks at Marko, who was wisely backing away down one of the wooden planks spanning the two boats, trying to get back onto the Singaporean ship.

Suddenly, an all-mighty roar came from high up in the sky, followed by a large ball of purple fire crashing into the sea next to Sinbad's boat, creating a lot of steam and confusion. But Hiccup knew what had just happened; it was a warning shot from a Dragon, or, to be more accurate, a Night Fury...

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><p>Sorry it's taken so long to write this chapter, it's just I've been busy doing other things. I'll try to get the next chapter up quicker!

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